



THE PRACTICAL HOUSEKEEPER'S OWN PAGE

The Health-Giving Prune

Pausing at one of the many attractive booths for food demonstrations at Jamestown, one is confronted by the traditional prune. Possibly the searcher for novelty feels the inclination to move along until the eye is caught by the generous bowl of the cooked fruit of immense size. The demonstrator graciously asks one to sample, and one's surprise is great to know how a prune tastes when properly cooked.

Tender—the prune must not be boiled—for that toughens the skin—only simmered, and that for three or four hours.

Juicy—this simmering process insures rich juice.

Sweet—but attend the demonstrator's words—"No sugar is added to the cooking prune. The fruit is eighteen per cent. sugar, and by proper cooking is made as sweet as anyone can possibly wish."

How surprised the group of samplers look at this announcement, and the vision comes to the amateur housekeeper of her cook (?) adding to the boiling prunes quantities of sugar.

Large—because thoroughly soaked—twenty hours was the rule set forth. This scientific cooking makes of prunes a delicious, palatable and health-giving article of food.

The following receipts are among those submitted by experts in a "Prune Contest" for prizes at an exhibit held in San Jose:

SPICED PRUNES.

Wash and soak over night a pint of prunes in water enough to cover well. Stew until the skins are soft, then pour off the water and add a cupful of good cider vinegar, two cups of sugar, cloves and cinnamon to suit the taste.

PRUNE WATER ICE.

Prune preparation. Put one and a half pounds of prunes in a stew pan, adding a little water, cover pan and set on back of range, simmering slowly

until tender; rub through colander, sweeten to taste, then freeze same as ice cream. When frozen serve on a plate with water ice around it. Water Ice.—One pint clarified sugar, one-half pint water, rasp two lemons on sugar, juice of five lemons and one orange, add together and strain through hair sieve; when cold freeze as ice cream.

STUFFED PRUNES.

Soak California prunes in water until soft enough to pit; then fill each prune with a quarter of teaspoonful of powdered sugar, some nicely chopped walnuts and half a date. Shape the prunes nicely and sprinkle with granulated sugar. These are richer if left a week before eating them.

SANTA CLARA PRUNE CAKE.

Two cups of sugar creamed with one-half cup of butter, three eggs (whites beaten separately) two-thirds cup of sweet milk, one heaping teaspoonful of baking powder, one tablespoonful of powdered mace, one cupful of chopped walnuts, one cupful of chopped prunes that have been steamed. Line a cake pan with buttered paper, fill in a layer of the cake batter, spread a layer of the chopped prunes and over this put a layer of the nuts, then another layer of cake, and so on until the pan is two-thirds full. Bake in a steady but not quick oven.

PRUNE BROWN BREAD.

One cup cornmeal, two cups graham flour, one-half cup of molasses, one cup sour milk, one teaspoonful soda, one teaspoonful salt, one cup dried prunes, washed, pitted and chopped fine. Scald the cornmeal and then add the other ingredients. Put in greased tins and steam three hours.

PRUNE SOUFFLE.

Prunes stewed, either chopped or pressed through colander, one cup; whites of six eggs beaten to a foam, six tablespoonfuls granulated sugar, beat sugar and egg together, add prunes and beat the mixture quickly and thoroughly. Put into a buttered dish and bake thirty minutes in a slow oven. Serve with cream, plain or whipped.

the water off, as that leaves the sediment which has sunk to the bottom. Rinse yet a third time and cook in a little boiling salted water for fifteen or twenty minutes. Drain off, cover with cold water and when cold drain again. Put the leaves into a chopping bowl and cut fine. Have ready in a frying pan a tablespoonful of hot butter, add the spinach, season with salt and pepper. Heat thoroughly and serve on a hot dish surrounded by toast.

HOUSEHOLD NOTES.

To successfully bake a piecrust without its shrinking, line it with paraffin paper and fill with uncooked rice.

Enamelled ware that has become burned or discolored may be cleaned by rubbing with coarse salt and vinegar.

A teaspoonful of lemon juice to a quart of water will make rice very white and keep the grains separate when boiled.

If eggs are to be boiled hard have the water boiling when the eggs are dropped in. This will prevent the yolks from turning dark.

Green vegetables can be kept fresh for days by wetting them and then rolling them up in paper, screwing the ends to keep out the air.

More coal is burned than necessary by not closing the dampers when the fire is not being used. In the same way gas is wasted or any kind of fuel.

If the stiffness is out of your veil and it is still good, wrap it around a pasteboard roll, stretching full width, and steam. Let it dry on the roll and it will be good as new.

Cream twenty-four hours old and very cold always whips best.

Cutting onions, turnips and carrots across the fiber makes them more tender when cooked.

Weak ammonia water will clean hair brushes very rapidly and will keep the bristles white and stiff.

To clean a chiffon blouse cover the blouse with powdered ammonia, roll it up tightly and leave it for a day or two. Then shake out the blouse, which will look like new.

To clean brass pans, rub them with powdered kaffir brick moistened with vinegar. Afterward wash them and, when dry, polish with a little whiting on a leather or soft cloth.

The stock pot is the mainspring of a well-managed kitchen. In it should be collected bones, poultry, trimmings and vegetables, for any scrap is welcome. A piece of shin beef may sometimes be added for extra strength. There will be no lack of soup, gravy and sauces if this is kept constantly going; it is the foundation for them all.

FRENCH STEW.

Two pounds round steak, two level tablespoonfuls butter, one onion chopped fine, bay leaf, 12 cloves, eight whole allspice, cayenne, two medium sized diced carrots, salt and pepper to taste. Melt the butter in the soup kettle, add the onion and cook for five minutes without browning. Then add the meat cut in small pieces and remaining ingredients, except salt and pepper. Cook slowly until meat is tender, about 2½ hours. When done add salt and pepper and thicken; boil five minutes and serve.

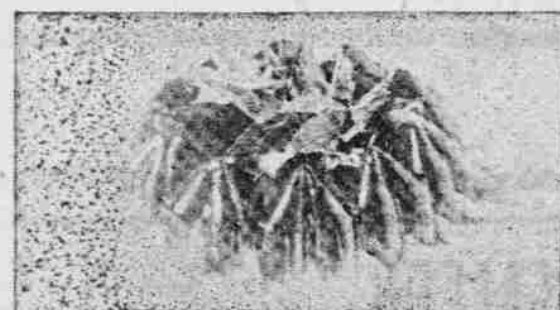
SPINACH.

Like all greens, spinach should be thoroughly looked over, washed, then blanched. Cut off the stalks and after looking over the leaves put into a large pan of cold water. Plunge them up and down to remove the sand, then lift the leaves out into a second pan of water. Do not attempt to drain

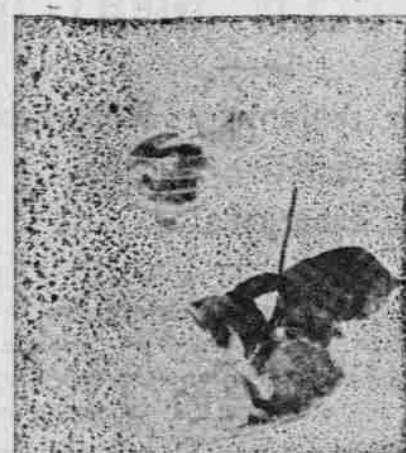
Illustrated Dishes



Peach Shortcake.



Mint Jelly.



Salpicon of Fruit.

PEACH SHORTCAKE.—Sift three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one teaspoonful of salt with one quart of flour, then rub into this until it resembles fine meal, three tablespoonfuls of butter; then add just enough milk to make a soft dough, divide into two parts, roll out on a floured board so as to fit a well-buttered, oblong pan; place one piece in pan, spread generously with butter, lay other on top and bake in moderate oven; when done split apart, spread with quartered fruit, dust with powdered sugar, put other layer on top, cover with fruit, over this spread a meringue; brown delicately in the oven; garnish with fruit and serve with thick cream.

Mint Jelly.—A dainty addition to the meat course. Boil twelve sprigs of mint in one pint of water for five minutes, strain and add enough more boiling water to make the liquid measure one pint. Soak one box of gelatin in one pint of cold water until softened, add the one pint of hot mint water, juice of four lemons, one and one-half cups of sugar, stir until gelatin is dissolved, then add one pint more of hot water, enough green vegetable coloring to tint, pour in a border mold and set on ice until firm. When ready to serve, unmold by dipping an instant in hot water; garnish with whites of eggs cut into eighth; sprigs of mint in the center.

Nut Salads

CREAMED CHESTNUTS.—Boil or steam the large Spanish chestnuts until tender. Make a cream sauce of milk or cream, seasoned with butter, salt and pepper and slightly thickened, and pour over the chestnuts. Serve as a vegetable. These are delicious. The smaller chestnuts may be served in the same way.

ALMOND SALAD.—Chop and stone six olives. Add a half cup blanched almonds, chopped, also a half cup of tender celery cut fine. Mix with salad dressing and serve on lettuce leaves.

NUT AND CHEESE SANDWICHES.—Mix the rolled peanuts with an equal part of grated cheese and spread.

PEANUT BISCUIT.—Mix together dry one quart flour, three teaspoonfuls baking powder, one-half cupful peanuts, chopped, and a little salt. Add one-fourth cupful melted butter, rubbing it well with the flour, and sufficient sweet milk to roll out with as little kneading as possible. Bake in quick oven.

LITTLE MR. LITTLE.

Little Mr. Little is a timid little man. Whose little life is ordered on a very modest plan. He owns a little cottage, he runs a little shop. He hasn't any hankering to clamber to the top. He makes a little profit on the goods he has to sell. And when he seeks his little bed he sleeps exceeding well.

Little Mr. Little is a man you'd never note. His hat is five and something, and he wears a rusty coat. The trolley rush upsets him, he never gets a seat. And half the leading men in town have trodden on his feet. But little children love him, though his clothes are out of style. And dogs run out to meet him, and wag their tails and smile.

Of learning he has nothing, of talent not a spark. He doesn't own one quality commanding of remark. With mind too small for envy or pride or guile or greed. This little Mr. Little is a funny sort, indeed. And yet the host of friends he has! In every block are scores. For little Mr. Little's heart is big as all outdoors.

IMPERIAL RICE.

Put three cupfuls of milk, one-fourth of a teaspoonful of salt and one-half of a cupful of well washed rice into a double boiler. Cook until the milk has

Secrets of Coffee Making

By a lucky slip of memory we discovered a valuable secret. There was great perturbation in the cook's domain. The mistress was hastily summoned. The milk vender had forgotten to bring the cream for coffee. For once the 'phone failed to dispel the dilemma, for it was Sunday and shops were closed. Though mine hostess was a professional woman with twenty-five years of active public life to her credit, events proved her to be still equal to domestic emergencies.

Investigation of the ladder brought to light a dish of melted ice cream, still sweet, vanilla flavored. This was beaten into some skimmed milk left over from breakfast, and the coffee set before the guests. "Delicious!" every one declared. "Tell me," I said, when I caught her alone, "Does Mazie flavor her coffee with vanilla? I thought I detected the faintest perceptible flavor." Then the Doctor laughingly confessed. "A great improvement anyway," was the honest verdict. Later experiment has disclosed the fact that one-fourth of a teaspoonful of medium-strength vanilla, added the last thing before serving, to enough coffee for four persons, improves it fifty per cent. The secret of perfection is to use enough vanilla to cover the strong coffee flavor, yet not enough to be detected.

A pinch of salt in coffee has long been my secret for a certain delicate flavor that everyone likes, but I did not know until recently, that I had in some mysterious way, stumbled upon the modus operandi which has made the coffee of Norway "Superb." In that country the coffee is roasted fresh every morning in a covered shovel kept in constant motion over the fire. A bit of salted butter added after the roasting process is begun, gives it an indescribable flavor as delightful as it is subtle. The French, too, have made their reputation for excellent coffee by using butter while roasting it. A piece of butter the size of a walnut, with a dessert-spoonful of powdered sugar to three pounds of green coffee are the proportions used. This is said to bring out both flavor and aroma, and moreover, gives the slight caramel taste which tourists remember to have enjoyed no where but in France.

Elderly housekeepers declare the morning beverage of inferior quality since the regime of factory roasting. All old-time cooks held their weekly coffee roasting religiously, believing that in no other way could they provide genuine, healthful coffee. But if we accept the word of a grocer of our acquaintance, danger menaced the household even then. During the years when green coffee predominated in retail trade, a certain new brand of more vivid color than ordinary, aroused his suspicion. He washed five pounds of it in several waters, and was rewarded with half a cupful of Paris green sediment. Doubtless the cheaper grades are still colored to obtain entrance to the wholesale houses, which condition may account for the peculiar "shaking" sensation often experienced after drinking coffee at a cheap restaurant.

As to the blend of coffee, every individual has his choice, and in these days it is not difficult to find his taste anticipated in one of the numerous factory blends. But one may choose a pleasing blend and still fail to make a palatable beverage. White of egg (yolk should never be used), clears coffee the best of anything, but too much of it spoils the flavor. The part of the egg that is usually wasted, contains enough of the white to clear quite a quantity of coffee. I refer to the white lining of the shell, which may easily be stripped out while yet moist, and to which some of the white always clings. It is positively unnecessary to boil the egg shell in the coffee, as many cooks do, but the lining is both clean and adequate. It may be used just as well when dried, and it takes but a moment to strip them from the shells on baking day, and set away in a dish for future use.

Thick, sweet cream, slightly beaten, is an indispensable accessory to good coffee; but when not at hand, the white of an egg, beaten stiff, and added to milk, makes a fair substitute. Coffee essence that will be found very useful in traveling or camping out, may be made from one-fourth of a pound of coffee, ground fine, and put in a percolator and simmered in one pint of water, poured over boiling hot. Allow to filter about twenty minutes, not boil at any time. When cool, cork up in a bottle or can. Two tablespoonfuls to a breakfast cup of hot milk, makes a healthful and quickly prepared drink.

Oysters

SCALLOPED OYSTERS WITH MUSHROOMS.

Have ready a pint bowl of fine cracker-crumbs. Butter a deep baking dish; put a layer of cracker-crumbs on the bottom; wet this with some of the oyster liquor and a little onion juice; next arrange a layer of oysters sprinkled with salt, pepper and a teaspoonful of finely chopped walnuts. Place over the oysters a layer of button mushrooms, and dot with small pieces of butter; continue the layers alternating, until the dish is nearly full; pour in carefully a cup of rich cream, and cover the top with thin slices of buttered toast, arranging fingers of toast around the edge as a border. Bake in a hot oven for fifteen minutes, and serve garnished with fried parsley.

MUTTON TASTIES WITH OYSTERS. Lay rather thick slices of cold mutton in a baking pan, spreading each piece with a little tomato catsup. Place on each slice three large, plump oysters, dust with pepper and salt, and place in a hot oven until the oysters begin to curl; serve squares of fried bread, with blanched celery.

INDIVIDUAL OYSTER PIES. These delicious little pies are made so that one may be served as a portion. Place six oysters in a small earthen-ware dish, adding a hard-boiled egg sliced; season with a little powdered mace, salt and pepper and pour over a tablespoonful of cream. Prepare some rich short-cake dough, roll out not too thin and cover each dish with an upper crust; bake ten minutes in a quick oven, and serve in the individual dishes garnished with parsley.

CUBAN CROQUETTES. To a cupful of cold boiled hominy, add a teaspoonful of melted butter, and stir it well, adding by degrees a cupful of milk, till all is made into a soft, light paste; add a pinch of salt, one well beaten egg, a little celery salt and a pint of chopped oysters; shape into oval balls with floured hands, dip in beaten eggs, then roll in cracker crumbs, and fry in hot fat. Serve on toasted pilot biscuit, lightly dusted with Cayenne.

OYSTER TRIPE LYONNAISE. Cut up half a pound of cold boiled tripe into squares, and add a pint of small stewing oysters that have been carefully drained. Put two ounces of butter, a tablespoonful of chopped onion, and a little minced bacon in a frying-pan and fry a delicate brown; add to the tripe and oysters, a teaspoonful of chopped parsley, and season with salt, pepper and powdered mace; then place them in the pan with the onion and bacon. Stir constantly to prevent burning, until the oysters begin to curl; serve in small paper cases covering the tops with browned bread crumbs.

CHOCOLATE CARAMELS. Boil slowly together one pound of brown sugar, one-half cupful of molasses, one-fourth of a pound of grated chocolate, one-half cupful of cream and one tablespoonful of butter until it is like thick molasses. Take from the fire, add one teaspoonful of vanilla and pour into buttered pans, when portly cool mark in squares.

BROWN BREAD ICE CREAM. Make a good vanilla ice cream; add to the partly frozen cream, a pint of finely grated Boston brown bread crumbs; finish freezing and let it stand for four or five hours before using—the longer the better.

COCOANUT CARAMELS. One pound of sugar, one cup of grated cocoanut and one-half cup of rich cream; cook slowly until thick, flavor with lemon extract and add a tablespoonful of butter. When cool, form into little cakes and put on buttered pans.

THE UGLY WORD. When a lovely lassie tells you, And you're sitting by her side, That a man has never kissed her, Though a dozen men have tried, Though you doubt it, be not hasty. Let your answer be deferred: Do not qualify the lassie By that short and ugly word.

When a pretty lassie tells you, She can cook, although you know That her mother's in the kitchen, With her arms deep in the dough, Doubting brother, be not tactless, Just remember she's a lady— Kill that short and ugly word.

When a self-same lassie murmurs, That a secret she will keep, That she'll tell no living person— In her heart 'twill ever sleep, Don't believe her—do not tell her, Treat her statement as absurd; Simply smile, but do not utter That one short and ugly word.

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